

# Community Needs Implementation Strategy

Petersburg Medical Center

2013

## Needs Identified

The following items were identified as areas of interest during the Community Needs Assessment conducted in 2013.

- Aging community population
- Higher adult obesity rates when compared to the rest of the State
- Emergency Department utilization for mental disorder conditions
- Decreasing substance abuse in the community

### Aging Community Population

In 2000, persons aged 65 years or older in Petersburg comprised 8.78% of the population. In 2010, persons aged 65 years or older comprised 11.77% of the population. This represents an increase of 22.61%. This growth in the percentage of older residents necessitates and increase in services catering to this demographic. Petersburg Medical Center will provide education on falls to improve outcomes on fall incidents in the home. PMC will continue to grow the physical therapy department as well to provide physical, as well as occupational, therapy in an outpatient setting.

### Adult Obesity Rates

Petersburg currently has a larger percentage of adults with obesity than the state of Alaska as a whole. This can be attributed to lack of nutrition due to high cost of fresh produce, lack of physical activity, and lack of infrastructure in the community to encourage exercise (such as pedestrian paths, parks, and hiking trails). PMC will work to encourage healthy eating in the facility. Staff dieticians will provide education on healthy eating to the public as well as to employees so they may encourage patients to make healthy choices. PMC will partner with other agencies in the community to promote physical activity as well. Some examples include the pedometer challenge, Paddle Battle kayak event, and the Circle of Life run/walk.

### Emergency Department Utilization for Mental Disorder Conditions

Petersburg has seen high levels of utilization in the emergency department for mental disorder incidents. PMC will partner with the SHARE coalition, Petersburg Mental Health, and WAVE to address the issue of mental disease in Petersburg. Increasing awareness of the services provided by Petersburg Mental Health will help reduce the use of the hospital for episodes related to mental disease. Encouraging prevention rather than waiting to address incidents as they happen will help those residents dealing with mental disease to do so in a more healthy manner.

### Decreasing Substance Abuse in the Community

As many towns in Alaska do, Petersburg faces a challenge in the area of substance abuse. Alcohol abuse and tobacco use are both quite prevalent in the community. This can be attributed to difficulties dealing

with life in a small town in Alaska, binge drinking, and a lack of education on the detrimental effects of chronic use of these substances. By again partnering with the SHARE coalition and Petersburg Mental Health as well as the local police department PMC can play an important role in working to reduce the prevalence of substance abuse in our community. Education around drunk driving, effects of second hand smoke, and the long-term impact of binge drinking will help to inform our community with the goal of reducing our community's substance abuse.